(d) if so, whether Government have also raised the limit of bonus in favour of these low paid employees; and

(e) if so, to what extent and if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (e) The Labour Minister's Conference of major states and ESIC have recommended enhancement of wage ceiling for coverage under the ESI Scheme from Rs. 3000/- to Rs. 6500/- per month and also for enhancement of rates of contribution of the employers and the employees from the existing 4% to 4.75% and from 1.5% to 1.75% of the monthly wage respectively. Current rates of contribution are in force since 1.4.1992. Prior to this date the rates of contribution for employers and the employees were 5% and 2.5% respectively. For carrying out necessary amendments in the ESI (Central) Rules 1950, the notification inviting objection/ suggestions has been issued as per provisions of ESI Act, 1948.

The Payment of Bouns Act was amended only recently *i.e.* 30.8.95 so as to enhance the eligibility wage ceiling from Rs. 2500/- to Rs. 3500/- per month and calculation ceiling from Rs. 1600/- to Rs. 2500/- per month with effect from 1.4.1993.

Recommendations of Abid Hussain Expert Committee

*354. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state the details of the recommendations of Dr. Abid Hussain Expert Committee on SSI and tiny Sectors?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): The Expert Committee on Small Enterprises under the Chairmanship of Dr. Abid Hussain has not yet submitted the report to the Government.

Sick PSUs in Karnataka

*355. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the names of sick Central Public Sector Undertakings in Karnataka;

(b) the total accumulated losses of each of the undertakings;

(c) the reasons for these undertakings to become sick units;

(d) the steps taken to review these undertakings and make them profitable; and

(e) whether any undertakings are considered for privatisation?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) The name of sick Central PSUs having their registered Office in the State of Karnataka together with their accumulated losses as on 31.3.95 are given below:—

(Rs. in Crores)

Sl. No.	Name of PSU	Accumulated losses
1.	Vignyan Industries Ltd.	8.28
2.	NTC (APKK&M) Ltd.	286.42
3.	Bharat Gold Mines Ltd.	205.58
4.	Mandya National Paper Mills Ltd.	149.56

(c) The reasons for sickness of these PSUs are enterprise specific. However, some of these are, excess manpower, old and obsolete Plants & Machinery, outdated technology, high interest burden, deep levels of gold mines, lack of orders etc.

(d) These sick industrial PSUs have been referred to BIFR for preparation of revival/rehabilitation packages. BIFR have registered them and appointed operating agencies for each PSU. Revival scheme has been approved by BIFR in case of Vignyan Industries Ltd. The draft scheme for revival of NTC(APKK&M) Ltd., is under consideration of concerned

authorities. BIFR have recommended Mandya National Paper Mills Ltd. for winding up. The Management have filed appeal in AAIFR which is under consideration. Bharat Gold Mines Ltd., is in process of preparation of revival scheme.

(c) No, Sir.

Move to delicence the entertainment electronics industry

*356. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minis ter of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's move of delicencing the entertainment electronics industry is also applicable to the multinationals;

(b) whether Government propose to reduce the excise duty on consumer electronics durable to a reasonable rationale; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) Delicensing of any industry is applicable to all entrepreneurs, both domestic and foreign. The foreign investors are however required to obtain necessary approvals for foreign investment separately as per laid down policy and parameters.

(b) and (c) Imposition, enhancement and reduction of excise duties for any industry is normally undertaken as a part of Annual Budget exercise at an appropriate time and is based on the tariff policy, requirements of the industry and other relevant factors.

Spending from the Consumer Welfare Fund in violation of Rules

*357. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:
SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there was flagrant violation of rules and regulations in 1995 for spending from the Consumer Welfare Fund;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Fund concerned can be utilised only through dole to the consumer bodies as financial assistance; and

(c) whether any inquiry will be conducted and amount recovered from those involved?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) So far, no such violation has come to the notice of the Ministry.

(b) No, Sir. Under the Consumer Welfare Fund Rules any agency/organisation, village/mandal/samiti level cooperative of consumers especially of women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, engaged in consumer welfare activities for a period of three years and registered under the Companies Act, 1956 or under any law for the time being in force is eligible to seek financial assistance from the Fund. Besides, any Industry as defined in the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 recommended by Bureau of Indian Standards and engaged for a period of five years in viable and useful research activities which has made or is likely to make significant contribution in formation of standard mark of the products of mass consumption; the State Governments, etc., is also eligible to seek financial assistance from the fund.

(c) In view of (a) above, question does not arise.